



Natural Resources Conservation Service
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NEWS RELEASE

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Taos Land First New Mexico Farmland Protection Site Under FRPP

Albuquerque, NM—Pasture land north of Taos recently became the first New Mexico site to be preserved under the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service's (NRCS) Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP). On April 19, NRCS, the Taos Land Trust, and the land owner finalized an agreement to permanently protect the entire parcel of land across from the El Prado Post Office north of Taos.

"It may not be a huge piece of land," says Taos Land Trust executive director Ernie Atencio, "but it is without a doubt some of the most productive and scenic land in the area, especially with the open lands of Taos Pueblo and views of Taos Mountain just behind it. This is an important piece of property for the community and we decided it would be well worth it for the land trust to purchase the development rights."

The Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program allows private landowners to decide how their land will be cared for in the future by voluntarily retiring certain development rights. The landowner retains ownership and is not required to provide public access. The landowner can continue to use the land for farming, ranching or sustainable forestry, can reserve limited home sites, can sell it or pass it on to heirs, but the protection stays with the land forever no matter who owns it.

"In addition to the obvious scenic value of the El Prado property," said Seth Fiedler, NRCS economist, "NRCS has classified the site as farmland of statewide importance because of its rich soils and long history of agricultural use, including water rights from the Acequia Madre del Prado dating to 1854."

For more information about the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program contact Seth Fiedler at 505.761.4416. Taos Land Trust can be contacted at 505.751.3138.

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